

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1-4, 6-17 and 20-23 are rejected. Claim 19 is allowed. Claims 5 and 18 are objected to and would be allowable if placed into independent form. Applicants have amended claim 1 to incorporate the limitations of claim 5, which depended from only independent claim 1, to thereby secure its allowability. Applicants also have amended claim 10 to incorporate the limitations of claim 18, which depended from only independent claim 10, to thereby secure its allowability. Claims 5, 9, 18 and 20 are cancelled. Thus, all of claims 1-4, 6-8, 10-17, 19 and 21-23 should be allowed as all of the remaining claims will depend from allowable independent claims 1 and 10.

Drawings

The Examiner previously had objected to the drawings as being informal. Applicants will provide formal drawings upon allowance of the application, consistent with the Examiner's comments.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC 102

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6-8, 10-17, 20 and 22 are rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by Kelly et al (6,650,869). This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

Applicant has amended claim 1 to incorporate the limitations of claim 5, which the Examiner indicates is allowable. Thus, claim 1 should be allowed. Claims 2, 4 and 6-8, which depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 also should be allowed. Applicant also has amended claim 10 to incorporate the limitations of claim 18, which the Examiner indicates is allowable. Thus, claim 10 should be allowed. Claims 11-17 and 22, which depend directly or indirectly from claim 10 also should be allowed.

Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
Application No. 09/813,144

Claim Rejections - 35 USC 103

Claims 3, 9 and 23 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kelley et al (6,650,869). This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

As to claim 9, this rejection is moot in view of the cancellation of the claim.

As already noted, Applicant has amended claim 1 to incorporate the limitations of claim 5, which the Examiner indicates is allowable. Thus, claims 3 and 23, each of which depends directly from claim 1, also should be allowed.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner considers claims 5 and 18 to be allowable if placed into independent form. Applicant is grateful for the Examiner's indication of allowability, and has amended claims 1 and 10 to incorporate the limitations of their respective dependent claim.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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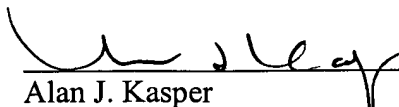
WASHINGTON OFFICE

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CUSTOMER NUMBER

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Respectfully submitted,


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